

OCCUPANT PROTECTION

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Seat Belts

California competes with five states in the nation to hold at or above 90 percent seat belt compliance. While the combined estimated 2003 populations of Arizona, Hawaii, Michigan, Oregon and Washington (the competing states) is 26.6 million, they do not compare to California's population of 35.5 million. Although California is ranked sixth at 90.4 percent (August 2004), that represents 32.1 million persons wearing seat belts. However, the fact remains that 3,400,000 Californians are not utilizing restraint systems, and are therefore, at higher risk for death or injury, if involved in a collision. Last year, California conducted its first teen statewide seat belt observational survey. While the teen seat belt compliance rate is 82.6 percent, more efforts need to be focused on that population.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) 2004 Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) provisional data reports 62.4 percent of vehicle occupants killed in automobile collisions were using seat belts. In the last five years (1999 to 2004), the percentage of occupants killed in automobile collisions and using safety belts increased by 12 percentage points from 50.4 percent to 62.4 percent.

Persons considered "high-risk," (e.g., teens, non-English speakers, and those in the lower socioeconomic classes) remain involved in a disproportionate number of fatal and injury collisions. The rich diversity that typifies many communities in California contributes to the vitality and strength of the state as a whole. At the same time, it presents a number of challenges for health departments, law enforcement, and community based organizations committed to addressing occupant protection. This high-risk group requires special education and programs targeting cultural and language barriers. In California, we continue to see an increase in ethnic and linguistic groups. According to the new projections by the California's Department of Finance Demographics Unit, the Hispanic populations will constitute the majority of California by 2040. By the middle of the century, the projections indicate that Hispanics will represent 53.6 percent of the state's population, with Caucasians comprising 23.3 percent, the Asian population at 12.1 percent; the African American population at 6.4 percent, the Pacific Island population at less than one-half of one percent, and Native American and people of more than one race 2.1 percent each. (2000 U.S. Census) Media campaigns will target teens, Spanish, and non-English speaking populations. In addition, health departments will utilize networks and relationships with ethnic communities to address traffic safety issues for the populations they represent.

In order to focus on the teen population, high schools are conducting High School Seat Belt Challenges to raise awareness and promote safety belt use through a good-natured, student run competitions. OTS expects to fund 20 agencies to conduct high school seat belt challenges, whereby high schools challenge other schools within a school district to compete against each other to determine which school has the highest safety belt usage, which school can demonstrate the most improved safety belt usage rate and which school ran the best overall awareness campaign for safety belt usage. The competition takes place over a two-week period with designated students, or student coordinators, taking on the majority of the responsibility for running the program. The challenge involves two unannounced observations of student safety belt usage as they enter campus to determine a percentage of students wearing their safety belts. The first survey is conducted before the beginning of the awareness campaign. The second observation is conducted towards the

end of the awareness campaign. The results of the observations indicate the effectiveness of the safety belt awareness challenge. Awareness campaigns include activities such as school assemblies, development and dissemination of promotional materials such as posters, flyers and newsletters, among other things. As an added component to the teen statewide seat belt observational survey, schools that participate in High School Seat Belt Challenges are also used as school sites for the teen statewide observational study. They will be evaluated separately to determine effectiveness of their educational programs.

California adopted the national theme "Click It or Ticket" for the Buckle Up America May 2006 mobilization. The enforcement period will be expanded by one week prior to the beginning of the national two-week campaign and California will use a "Click It or Ticket" logo developed for the state. The award money granted for the Innovative Seat Belt Grant will again be retained by NHTSA to be used for paid media on radio and television based on a media buy plan submitted by OTS. OTS will develop and Caltrans will post signs displaying the California "Click It or Ticket" logo.

An OTS Seat Belt Mini-grant program will fund local projects to conduct enforcement programs addressing the motorists who fail to buckle their safety belts. The grants will provide overtime for officers to specifically and solely enforce occupant protection laws. The goal of the "Click It or Ticket" campaign is to increase seat belt use statewide to 93 percent by June of 2006. This will be accomplished through the combined efforts of CHP, OTS, and local law enforcement. OTS mini-grants will be awarded to local law enforcement agencies and state university and college police departments. The maximum mini-grant amount will be based upon the population of cities and a maximum \$10,000 for state college and university police departments. Over 4.6 million dollars will be distributed to law enforcement agencies to offset overtime and reporting costs for the May 15 – June 4, 2006.

Traffic fines for failing to use seat belts and child safety seats have increased in 2004 to a maximum of \$89 for a first offense and \$191 for a second offense for adult violations (16 years and older) and \$340 for a first offense and \$871 for a second offense for child violations.

Child Passenger Safety (CPS)

California's child safety seat use rate is 89.6 percent (August 2004). Child passenger safety remains a difficult topic to master because of the constant technical changes in laws and regulations, and development of new products. California's focus is to increase the child passenger safety compliance rate. Programs will train NHTSA Child Passenger Safety technicians and instructors, but most of all, conduct child passenger safety restraint checkups, create fitting stations and educational presentations.

From 1975 through 2003, an estimated 7,010 lives were saved by the use of child restraints (child safety seats or adult belts). In 2003, an estimated 443 children under age five were saved as a result of child restraint use, representing an increase of 67 lives saved from the previous year. National research on the effectiveness of child safety seats has found them to reduce fatal injury by 71 percent for infants (less than one year old) and by 54 percent for toddlers (1-4 years old) in passenger cars. For infants and toddlers in light trucks, the corresponding reductions are 58 percent and 59 percent, respectively (National Center For Statistics and Analysis – Lives Saved Calculations for Infants and Toddlers, March 2005)

When comparing 2003 and 2004, vehicle occupants under age four killed while not using safety seats decreased 5.1 percentage points (refer to Figure 1 below).

Figure 1

CHILDREN UNDER AGE FOUR (VEHICLES OCCUPANTS) BY YEAR <i>(Source: SWITRS Tables 4G and 4H)</i>				
YEAR	% KILLED USING SAFETY SEATS	CHILD SAFETY SEAT USAGE RATES	AGE 0-3 KILLED	AGE 0-3 INJURED
1996	33.0%	85.6%	36	3,582
1997	17.6%	89.6%	34	2,992
1998	43.5%	85.8%	45	3,073
1999	28.2%	85.9%	39	2,855
2000	44.2%	87.4%	43	3,020
2001	41.4%	87.6%	29	2,827
2002	41.9%	85.6%	31	2,915
2003	40.0%	86.6%	45	2,718
*2004	38.2%	89.6%	34	2,211

**This is provisional data that is subject to change*

Children under age four killed and injured as a percent of total killed and injured decreased since 1996. The figure below indicates an increase in children age 0-3 killed and a slight decrease in children age 0-3 injured as a percent of the total occupants killed and injured from 2003 to 2004 (refer to Figure 2 below).

Figure 2

PERCENT OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE FOUR (VEHICLE OCCUPANTS) KILLED AND INJURED BY YEAR <i>(Source: SWITRS Tables 4G and 4H)</i>		
YEAR	CHILDREN AGE 0-3 KILLED AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL	CHILDREN AGE 0-3 INJURED AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL
1996	1.32	1.40
1997	1.40	1.24
1998	1.90	1.23
1999	1.57	1.14
2000	1.64	1.14
2001	1.05	1.06
2002	1.08	1.10
2003	1.55	1.06
*2004	1.33	1.03

**This is provisional data that is subject to change*

ACTION PLANS

With California's continued increase in population with a growth of 1.67 percent, which represent over 599,000 new residents to Californian and 551,000 new births during the fiscal year 2004. (California Department of Finances 2004 Demographic Report) California's Office of Traffic Safety continues much needed funding to keep up with the new population totals, provide an ongoing effective occupant protection program that assures the public is educated and motivated to use seat belts and child safety seats on every ride. A combination of legislative mandates, enforcement, public information campaigns, education, and incentives are necessary to achieve significant, lasting increases in occupant restraint usage.

An educational campaign is being planned to encourage "best practice" recommendations from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration which will take advantage of new educational materials in print and broadcast formats by NHTSA.

The purpose of the 405 incentive grant program is to reinforce key elements of a strategy to encourage states to enact and strengthen occupant protection laws and provide for the enforcement efforts related to the laws. The program will provide for NHTSA's Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training, the certification and re-certification program for the technician and instructor level candidates, and provide for child passenger safety seat check ups and fitting stations. The Department of Health Services provides assistance to The California Office of Traffic Safety with the statewide coordination of child passenger safety efforts in California. Through the Vehicle Occupant Safety Program, staff assists local agencies by providing technician training and resources to counties and regions in need. In addition, staff also facilitates the Child Passenger Safety Quality Task Force, made up of state and local public health, law enforcement, nurses and hospitals, fire fighters, EMS, California Safe Kids, independent and community-based organizations, and veteran advocates throughout the state, which serves as an advisory body and reviews CPS materials to be distributed in California. The Task Force continues to work on strategies for advancing the statewide child passenger safety infrastructure, to include data collection and analysis, multi-level communication, and professional development to sustain interest and involvement in this field.

As child safety seat usage increases, misuse continues among special needs and foster children. To ensure that every infant and child is discharged from medical institutions are riding safely, California coordinates special needs child safety seat training for nurses and hospital staff who treat pediatric and special needs patients.

II. TASKS

TASK 1 - PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION

This task provides for the necessary staff time and expenses incurred by OTS that are directly related to the planning, development, coordination, monitoring, auditing, and evaluation of projects within this program area, and the preparation of the 2006 Highway Safety Plan. Funding is also provided in this task for the printing of brochures and pamphlets, distributing literature and media materials developed through successful projects,

or obtained from other sources. Assistance is also provided under this task to individuals to attend and participate in technology transfer workshops, training sessions, or educational meetings or conferences.

TASK 2 - COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY OCCUPANT PROTECTION PROJECTS

These projects conducted by county health departments and school districts include activities with schools, churches, medical facilities, law enforcement, courts, media, civic groups, large and small businesses, governmental agencies, etc. These projects develop child safety seat programs that educate and train on the correct use of safety belts and child safety seats. Activities include: conducting media events, public information campaigns, child safety seat check ups, child safety seat and seat belt surveys, high school seat belt challenges, educational presentations, court diversion classes; disseminating educational literature; and distributing low cost or no cost child safety seats to low income families.

Fund	Project #	Agency	FFY 2006 Funds
157	OP0509	Merced County Health Department	\$116,124
402	OP0603	Solano County Health and Social Services	\$149,669
	OP0605	San Mateo County	\$32,300
	OP0607	San Francisco County Department of Health	\$279,717
	OP0609	Lake County	\$49,432
405	OP0505	Inyo County Superintendent of Schools	\$17,750
	OP0507	Los Angeles County	\$159,000
	OP0508	Los Angeles County	\$495,000
	OP0511	San Bernardino County	\$277,000
	OP0512	San Diego State University	\$183,913

TASK 3 - ENFORCEMENT AND EDUCATION OCCUPANT PROTECTION PROJECTS

These projects conducted by law enforcement and fire personnel include enforcement and education to increase the use of safety belts and child safety seats. Activities include: conducting media events, public information campaigns, child safety seat checkups, child safety seat and seat belt surveys, educational presentations; disseminating educational literature; providing NHTSA Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician training; distributing low cost or no cost child safety seats to low income families; and serving as fitting stations.

Fund	Project #	Agency	FFY 2006 Funds
157	OP0501	California Highway Patrol	\$71,000
	OP0502	Citrus Heights Police Department	\$135,000
	OP0504	Fresno Police Department	\$104,772
	OP0510	Roseville Fire Department	\$110,490
402	OP0601	Long Beach	\$165,077
	OP0604	California Highway Patrol	\$366,594
	OP0606	Tulare Police Department	\$69,001
	OP0608	Clovis Police Department	\$87,770
	OP0611	San Carlos Police Department	\$60,839
405	OP0411	San Carlos Police Department	\$14,906

TASK 4 - STATEWIDE USAGE SURVEYS

402

OP0402 - CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO RESTRAINT USAGE SURVEYS PROJECT

The Restraint Usage Surveys Project will continue into fiscal year 2006. Two annual statewide surveys will be conducted in the summers of 2006 and 2007 to determine seat restraint usage rates of front seat occupants (and infant/toddlers in any seat) for autos, vans, and non-commercial pickup trucks on non-highway and highway roads. A probability sample, using NHTSA approved methodology, of 80 non-highway and 80 highway intersections will be made. A CHP sample using similar methodology and sampling of 113 highway sites will be incorporated in sampling procedures. A partial sample of 80 sites (40 non-highway and 40 highway) will be drawn from the statewide sites described above, before and after the Memorial Day holiday weekend(s). Pre and posttests comparisons will be made. A statewide survey of 100 high school sites will collect and analyze seat belt usage rates for high school drivers and passengers at campus sites. The results from the statewide and high school survey will be analyzed using the CARP program, a special U.C. Berkeley survey program and in-house SPSS statistical routines using criteria and statistical procedures approved by NHTSA. (\$208,871)

TASK 5 - STATEWIDE CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY TRAINING

2003b

OP0503 - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES VEHICLE OCCUPANT SAFETY PROJECT (VOSP)

This project continues into federal fiscal year 2006. VOSP will coordinate with its numerous state and local partners on strategies to extend the reach of child passenger safety. In each activity, VOSP will help its constituency to see the connections across age groups so that uniformly we reach youngsters from 0 to 16. Objectives include stabilizing the fledgling technician training system; offering a new series of short "awareness" trainings to help integrate CPS into a variety of healthcare, education, EMS, law enforcement and community settings; and assisting local health departments and others in the CPS Network to work together on joint problem-solving as well as sharing resources and materials targeted to hard-to-reach populations. Lastly, VOSP will work with leaders in the field to establish CPS

quality assurance standards to improve access, retention, consistency and competency for both service providers and advocates. With so many new laws and the ever-growing number of new parents in our state, the coordinated work California interdisciplinary CPS Network remains critical to maximizing resources and helping families learn what they need to do to keep their children safe. (\$515,988)

TASK 6 – INNOVATIVE PROJECTS TO INCREASE SEAT BELT USE

405

This task will include a public information and education campaign, mini grants for local law enforcement agencies, and personnel to coordinate the California Seat Belt Compliance Campaign. The projects provide funds for an extensive media campaign using the NHTSA contractor and coordinated with the California Highway Patrol and local enforcement agencies. A total of \$1,300,000 will be held back by NHTSA to conduct the media campaign. This campaign will utilize California's "Click It or Ticket" slogan and "Baggy Pants" PSA.

OP0514 - CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

CALIFORNIA SEAT BELT COMPLIANCE CAMPAIGN (CSBCC)

The CSBCC will attempt to attain a 92 percent seat belt use rate by September 2005. Through the combined efforts of state and local law enforcement, a seat belt enforcement campaign will be conducted for a 21-day period in May and June 2005 in support of the NHTSA "Click It or Ticket" National Mobilizations. Funds provided by the CHP grant will be utilized to provide a salary and travel for a retired annuitant project coordinator and increase the level of seat belt enforcement hours on an overtime basis for CHP first line supervisors, officers, and administrative time to meet grant reporting requirements. (\$147,247)

TASK 7 – MINI-GRANTS TO INCREASE SEAT BELT USE

157

The Office of Traffic Safety will solicit local projects to conduct enforcement programs addressing motorists who fail to buckle their safety belts. The goal of the project is to increase California's usage rate to 93 percent in 2006. This task provides funds for overtime costs for local law enforcement agencies and state college and university police departments in addition to the California Highway Patrol and local law enforcement's existing commitment to enforcing seat belt and child safety laws. The mini grants being developed for local law enforcement include a three-week-long wave of concentrated enforcement activity that will be accompanied by a highly visible media campaign in May 2006. The maximum amount for each mini-grant will be based upon a city's population:

❖ UNDER 5000	\$ 7,000
❖ 5,000 – 50,000	\$15,000
❖ 50,001 – 100,000	\$25,000
❖ 100,001 – 150,000	\$40,000
❖ 150,001 – 250,000	\$65,000
❖ OVER 250,001	\$90,000

State University/College Police Department Maximum \$10,000

An announcement regarding requests for mini-grants is scheduled for October 2005 with a deadline of December 2, 2005. The mini-grants will only cover the May 2006 mobilization period using Section 405 funds (\$5,000,000)

**FISCAL YEAR 2006 PROGRAM FUNDING
(OCCUPANT PROTECTION)**

OP Task	Title	Major Cost Items					
1	Program Development and Administrative Coordination	Personnel, Travel, Contracts, Printing					
2	Comprehensive Community Occupant Protection Projects	Personnel Costs, Travel, Contractual Services, Safety Seats, Bicycle Helmets, TV/VCR, Training Costs					
3	Enforcement and Education Occupant Protection Projects	Personnel Costs, Contractual Services, Car Seats, Equipment, Training Costs					
4	Statewide Usage Surveys	Personnel, Operating Expenses					
5	Statewide Child Passenger Safety Training	Personnel Costs, Operating Expenses, Child Safety Seats, Contractual Services, Travel, Printing, Facilities, Equipment, Training Costs					
6	Innovative Projects to Increase the Seat Belt Use Rate	Personnel Costs, Contractual Services					
Task # / Agency	Funding Sources/Codes						
	157	163	164AL	402	405	2003B	
1 Local	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
1 State	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$79,119.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2 Local	\$116,124.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$99,482.01	\$1,209,883.70	\$149,669.00	
2 State	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$183,913.00	\$0.00	
3 Local	\$350,357.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$235,818.00	\$165,077.00	\$0.00	
3 State	\$82,144.36	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$833,457.00	\$0.00	
4 Local	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4 State	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5 Local	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
5 State	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$515,988.00	
6 Local	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
6 State	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$147,246.70	\$0.00	

**FISCAL YEAR 2006 PROGRAM FUNDING
(OCCUPANT PROTECTION)**

OP Task	Title			Major Cost Items			
7	Innovative Mini Grants to Increase the Seat Belt Use Rate			Personnel Costs, Contractual Services, and Educational Materials			
Task # / Agency	Funding Sources/Codes						
	157	163	164AL	402	405	410	
7 Local	\$5,000,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
State	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
TOTALS							
	Local:	\$5,466,481.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$335,300.01	\$1,374,960.70	\$149,669.00
	State:	\$82,144.36	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$79,119.00	\$1,164,616.70	\$515,988.00